

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8564

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UNCLAS SOFIA 1577

USDOC FOR BEWT/JAMES ELLIS, BULGARIAN DESK OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, BU

SUBJECT: INDUSTRIAL COPYING - INQUIRY BY ELWELL-PARKER

REF: A) STATE 18771 B) STATE 173904

1. WHILE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE ANY COMPLETE ASSURANCE THAT INDUSTRIAL COPYING NEVER OCCURS HERE, BULGARIA DOES NOT HAVE REPUTATION FOR COPYING PRODUCTS OF US OR WESTERN EUROPEAN FIRMS. BALKANKAR IS LARGE PRODUCER OF HOISTS AND FORK LIFTS MOST OF WHICH EXPORTED TO EASTERN EUROPEAN MARKETS. WHILE IT HAS DISTRIBUTORSHIPS IN WESTERN MARKETS INCLUDING US, PENETRATION OF SUCH MARKETS HAS BEEN RELATIVELY SMALL TO DATE. BULGARIANS HAVE CONTACTED A NUMBER MANUFACTURERS OF ELECTRIC TRUCKS AND VEHICLES FOR PURPOSE OF IMPROVING QUALITY OF PRESENT PRODUCTION AND EXPANDING MARKETS THROUGH POSSIBLE COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS.

2. AS EXAMPLE BALKANKAR RECENTLY CONCLUDED LICENSING AGREEMENT WITH BRITISH FIRM RUBERY-OWENS FOR PRODUCTION LARGE-SCALE LIFTING VEHICLES CAPABLE MOVING CONTAINERS UP TO 40 TONS. PAYMENT WILL BE MADE FROM 50 PER CENT OF THE PRODUCTION WHICH ACCORDING TO GOB TRADE OFFICIALS WILL BE USED TO FILL ORDERS THAT RUBERY-OWEN IS UNABLE TO MEET FROM ITS OWN PRODUCTION. IT IS POSSIBLE BALKANKAR IS INTERESTED IN SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT WITH ELWELL-PARKER IN WHICH CASE WOULD WANT TO

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DISCUSS AND WORK ON PROTOTYPES OF ELECTRIC TRUCKS

WITH ELWELL-PARKER ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS, SAME PROCEDURE FOLLOWED WITH RUBERY-OWENS.

3. BALKANKAR HAS LONG ATTEMPTED TO ENTER INTO ARRANGEMENT WITH CLARK EQUIPMENT COMPANY FOR EXCHANGE OF TECHNOLOGY IN RETURN FOR WHICH THEY WOULD PROVIDE CLARK WITH ACCESS TO BALKANKAR'S MARKETS NOT ONLY IN EASTERN EUROPE BUT IN CERTAIN LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. BULGARIAN OFFICIALS HAVE STRESSED THAT BALKANKAR HAS ITS OWN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND IS REGARDED AS LEADER IN ITS FIELD WHO CAN OFFER TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS RECEIVE IT UNDER LICENSE AND MARKET-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS. IT IS NOT EXCLUDED THAT IN SOME CASES THE FIRM WOULD PAY CASH FOR ITEMS IT REGARDS AS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE.

4. EMBOFFS EXPECT TO SEE BALKANKAR OFFICIALS DURING PLOVDIV FAIR AND EMBASSY WILL CONTACT ELWELL VP JUDY BY LETTER FOLLOWING FAIR IF BALKANKAR INTENTIONS CAN BE ASCERTAINED TO GREATER DEGREE.
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